GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2368
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2007
ACCIDENTS DURING LAND MINES CLEARING OPERATIONS
Gawali Smt. Bhavana Pundlikrao

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of soldiers/civilians killed during land mines clearing operations on Indo-Pak border and Line of Control;

(b) the reasons for accidents during land mines clearance operations;

(c) whether such accidents during clearance of land mines happened mainly due to non-availability of high quality machines; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government for providing latest gazettes and security equipment to Army for quick and timely clearance of land mines?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) One soldier and 61 civilian casualties occurred during land mine clearing operations on Indo-Pak border and Line of Control.

(b) To ensure safety in demining operations, duly trained army personnel who laid the mines and were familiar with the terrain, are employed in mine recovery. Although detailed mapping of minefields is done, due to prolonged deployment some mines sink and get drifted away because of the terrain and environmental conditions.At times, it is further aggravated by rodents tugging at mines, leading to their displacement.

(c)&(d) : Mechanical mine recovery equipment was used extensively in mine recovery operations. In addition, soldiers involved in mine clearance operations post Op Parakram were provided with adequate protective gear. Mine detection dogs were also utilized where required. Upgrading of technology is a continuous process.